CHILD WELFARE SERVICES / CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

HANDBOOK FOR EVALUATION

OF

THE DRAFT PROPOSAL

August 16, 2000

A. INTRODUCTION

This Evaluation Handbook is designed to provide a foundation for establishing a uniformly applied approach for the evaluation of Bidders' responses to CWS/CMS' Request for Proposal (RFP). Section VIII of the RFP provides the basic framework for the evaluation process that this handbook will explain.

In addition to a brief discussion of the purpose and goals of the evaluation process, the handbook will include:

- A discussion of the importance of confidentiality
- An overview of the RFP Structure
- An overview of the Bidder Proposal Structure
- An explanation of the Evaluation Process
- Tools to be used in the Evaluation Process

B. PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The purpose of a draft proposal evaluation process is to ensure that the Bidders clearly understand the State's requirements before attempting to develop their final solutions and that the State clearly understands what each Bidder intends to propose before those proposals are finalized. The draft proposal process also gives the State and each Bidder the opportunity to discuss weaknesses and potentially unacceptable elements of a Bidder's proposal before final proposals are due, thereby affording Bidders the opportunity to correct any problems found.

The overall goal of the evaluation process is to pick the bid that presents the best value for the task of maintaining and operating the CWS/CMS. In doing so, every effort has been made to level the playing field between Bidders, so that each and every Bidder has an equal opportunity to compete for the procurement of this contract. The evaluation teams will play a significant role in the selection of a Bidder and bear a large portion of the responsibility for identifying the best Bidder for the job. This effort is greatly appreciated. Refer to Figure 1 on the following page for Project Key Action Dates that have been provided to all Bidders.

C. THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Total Confidentiality is paramount to the success of this procurement. Each member of the evaluation team will attend a security and confidentiality presentation and sign a "Confidentiality Statement" form. All members of the evaluation team will hold the Bidders' proposals in the strictest of confidence and are not allowed to discuss the Bidders' proposals with anyone but fellow Evaluation Team members. All Bidders' proposals and evaluation team material will remain in the RFP office, unless specifically authorized by DGS and with the approval of the State CWS/CMS Project Executive.
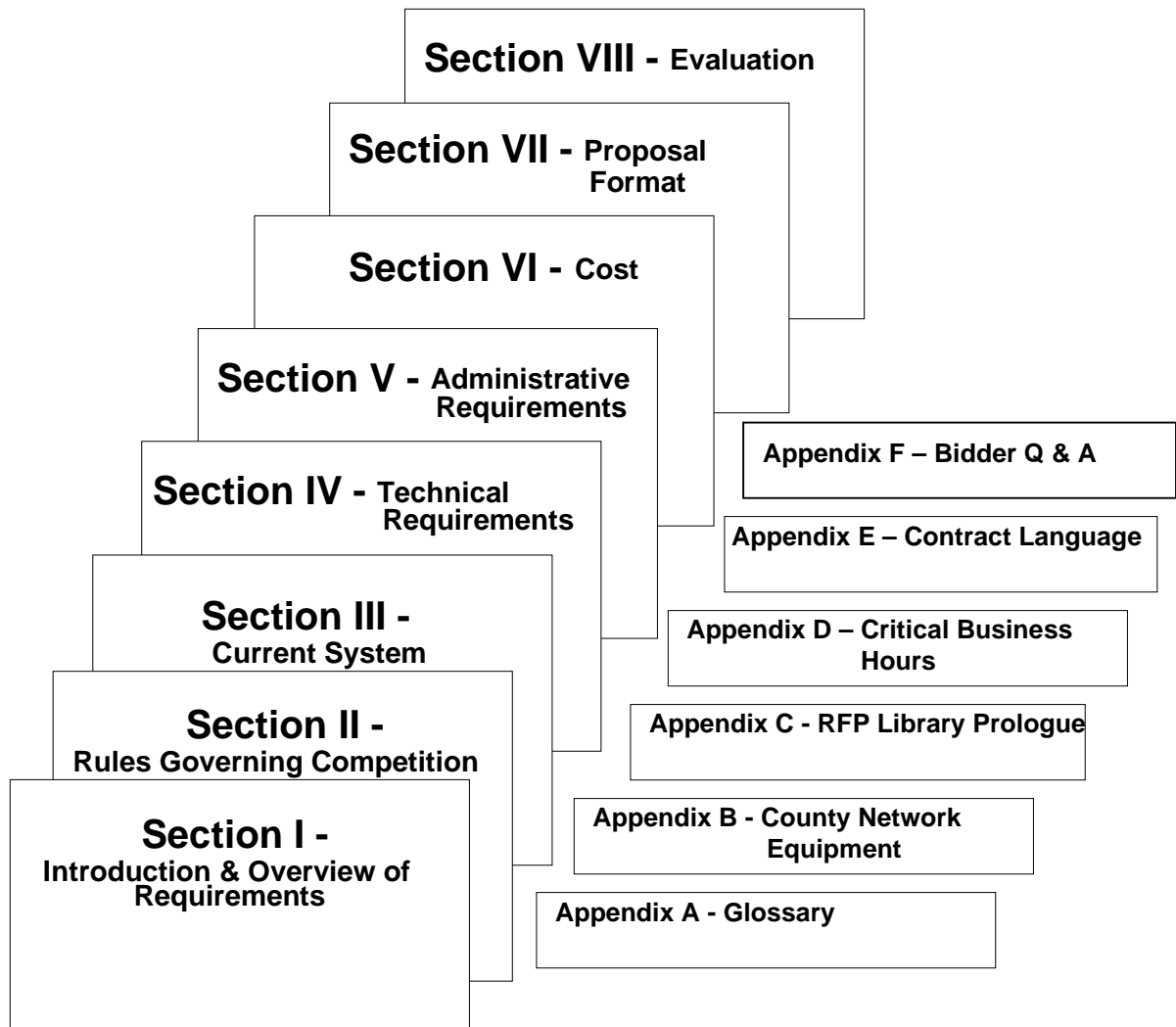
Figure 1 – Project Key Action Dates

	Key Action Dates		
	Action	**Time**	**Date**
1.	Release of RFP		06/04/99
2.	Last date/time for submittal of Letter of Intent to Bid, Exhibit I-C, signed Confidentiality Statement, Exhibit I-D, financial responsibility information.	5:00 p.m.	06/22/99
3.	Site visit to a "Dedicated" County (See RFP Section I.F)	10:00 a.m.	01/25/00
4.	Site visit to a " Coexistent" County (See RFP Section I.F)	10:00 a.m.	01/28/00
5.	Last date for submittal of proposed contract language changes	5:00 p.m.	7/26/00
6.	Last date to finalize contract language	5:00 p.m.	7/28/00
7.	Last date to submit questions prior to submittal of the Draft Proposal	5:00 p.m.	8/4/00
8.	Last date for requests for changes to the RFP	5:00 p.m.	8/11/00
9.	Last date for protests of the RFP requirements	5:00 p.m.	8/18/00
10.	Submission of Draft Proposal	5:00 p.m.	8/25/00
11.	Confidential discussions with individual Bidders	To be scheduled	TBD
12.	Submission of Final Proposal	5:00 p.m.	TBD
13.	Opening of Costs: Location TBD	2:00 p.m.	TBD
14.	Notice of Intent to Award		TBD
15.	Last date/time to protest the award	5:00 p.m.	TBD
16.	Contract award		TBD
17.	Contractor start work date		TBD
18.	Contractor's LAN connectivity is operational		Contract Award plus 1 Month
19.	Contractor's Project Office is fully operational		Contract Award plus 2 Months
20.	Transition Phase Complete		TBD

D. OVERVIEW OF THE RFP STRUCTURE

This page contains a diagram of the RFP structure, which consists of eight (8) sections and six (6) appendices. While the evaluator is encouraged to familiarize him/herself with all sections and appendices of the RFP, it is primarily Section IV that will be the evaluator's focus of attention. Section IV contains Technical Requirements for maintaining, operating, and enhancing CWS/CMS, and it is the Bidders' responses to these technical requirements that evaluators will be reviewing in detail. The evaluator should be familiar with Section III, which provides an overview of the current system. The appendices also contain helpful information for evaluators, such as the glossary in Appendix A. All RFP sections and appendices will be provided to evaluators.

Figure 2 – Diagram of RFP Structure

Section VIII - Evaluation

Section VII - Proposal Format

Section VI - Cost

Section V - Administrative Requirements

Section IV - Technical Requirements

Section III - Current System

Section II - Rules Governing Competition

Section I - Introduction & Overview of Requirements

Appendix F – Bidder Q & A

Appendix E – Contract Language

Appendix D – Critical Business Hours

Appendix C - RFP Library Prologue

Appendix B - County Network Equipment

Appendix A - Glossary
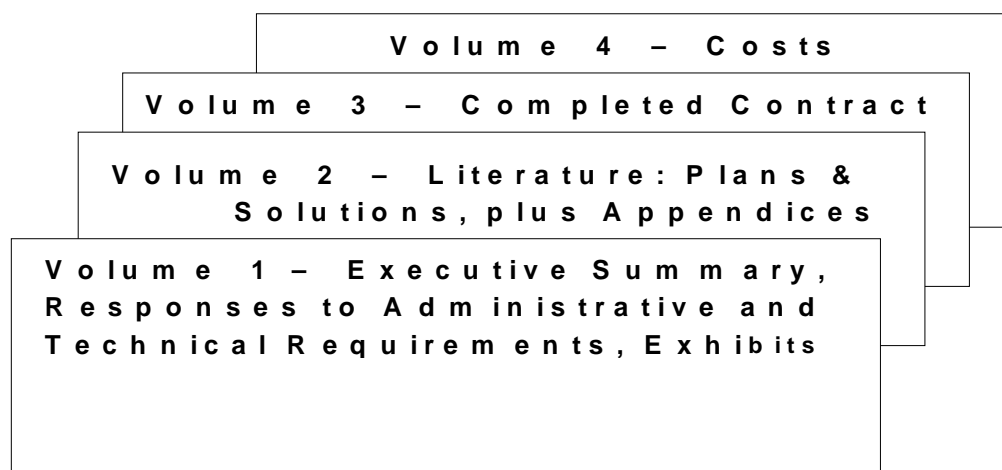
E. OVERVIEW OF THE BIDDER PROPOSAL STRUCTURE

The Bidder's proposal will be constructed in four (4) volumes. Volume 1 will contain the Bidder's Executive Summary, Responses to Administrative Requirements, Responses to Technical Requirements and Exhibits. Volume 2 will contain Plans and Plan descriptions, as well as narrative solutions or approaches. Volumes 1 and 2 will be available to all evaluators for use in performing the evaluation process. Of most interest to the evaluators will be the Bidder's Executive Summary in Volume 1, and the Bidder's responses to technical requirements and references to the location of each response in Volumes 1 and 2.

Figure 3 – Bidder Proposal Structure

Volume 4 – Costs

Volume 3 – Completed Contract

Volume 2 – Literature: Plans & Solutions, plus Appendices

Volume 1 – Executive Summary, Responses to Administrative and Technical Requirements, Exhibits
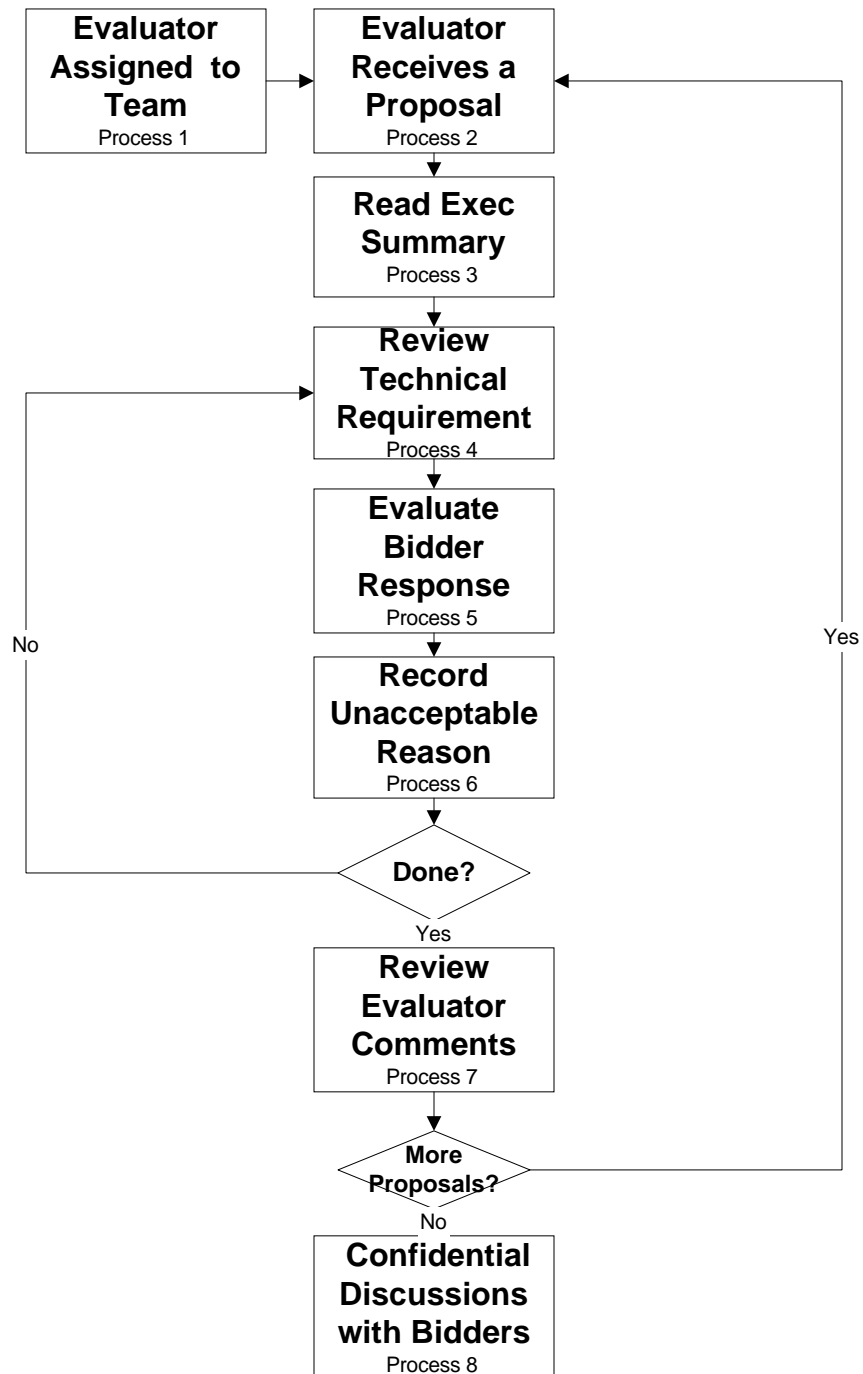
F. THE TEAM PROCESS MANAGER

Each evaluation team will have a Team Process Manager who will support the flow of the evaluation process. In addition to participating in the evaluation process, the role of the Team Process Manager consists of the following tasks:

- Assume responsibility for what comes into the evaluation team, e.g., everyone has the same proposal
- Remain apprised of the tools needed by the evaluation team and supply what is needed
- Keep evaluation team on track and in tune with tasks that must be performed
- Answer, or find someone who can, all questions raised
- Ensure that all output from the evaluation process is clear and readable
- Compile all output from the evaluation process into an aggregate of the evaluators' comments

G. EVALUATION PROCESS

The diagram in Figure 4 – Draft Proposal Evaluation Process provides a high level glance at the different stages of the evaluation process for draft proposals.

Figure 4 – Draft Proposal Evaluation Process

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┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│  Evaluator   │      │  Evaluator   │◄──────────────┐
│ Assigned to  │─────►│ Receives a   │               │
│    Team      │      │  Proposal    │               │
│  Process 1   │      │  Process 2   │               │
└──────────────┘      └──────┬───────┘               │
                             ▼                       │
                      ┌──────────────┐               │
                      │  Read Exec   │               │
                      │   Summary    │               │
                      │  Process 3   │               │
                      └──────┬───────┘               │
                             ▼                       │
          ┌─────────►┌──────────────┐               │
          │          │   Review     │               │
          │          │  Technical   │               │
          │          │ Requirement  │               │
          │          │  Process 4   │               │
          │          └──────┬───────┘               │
          │                 ▼                       │
          │          ┌──────────────┐               │
          │          │  Evaluate    │               │
     No   │          │   Bidder     │          Yes  │
          │          │  Response    │               │
          │          │  Process 5   │               │
          │          └──────┬───────┘               │
          │                 ▼                       │
          │          ┌──────────────┐               │
          │          │   Record     │               │
          │          │ Unacceptable │               │
          │          │   Reason     │               │
          │          │  Process 6   │               │
          │          └──────┬───────┘               │
          │                 ▼                       │
          │             ◇ Done? ◇                   │
          └─────────────◄                           │
                         │ Yes                      │
                         ▼                          │
                  ┌──────────────┐                  │
                  │   Review     │                  │
                  │  Evaluator   │                  │
                  │  Comments    │                  │
                  │  Process 7   │                  │
                  └──────┬───────┘                  │
                         ▼                          │
                    ◇ More   ◇──────────────────────┘
                    Proposals?
                         │ No
                         ▼
                  ┌──────────────┐
                  │ Confidential │
                  │ Discussions  │
                  │ with Bidders │
                  │  Process 8   │
                  └──────────────┘
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The evaluation process is an iterative process, defined in a simple and straightforward manner as shown in the following steps, which correspond to the processes shown in Figure 4.

- **Each Evaluator will be assigned to an Evaluation Team (Process 1)**

  For the purpose of evaluation, the RFP team has identified four strategic business needs (SBN) and determined which SBN each technical requirement fulfills. These strategic business needs are: Sustain the Viability of CWS/CMS; Strategizing for the Future and Partnering; Competent System Management, and; Focus on User Needs. Refer to Figure 5 for a reference to the definitions of the four strategic business needs. Four evaluation teams have been created, each of which has as its focus one strategic business need, and each evaluator will be assigned to one of these teams. There is a separate team which has Transition In as its sole focus.

Figure 5 – Definition of Strategic Business Needs

Strategic Business Need	Reference to Definition
Sustain the Viability of CWS/CMS	The continuing viability of CWS/CMS depends on the quality maintenance and operations of the system's technical infra-structure, the currency and usability of the software application, and a proactive administrative management that is responsive to the users' day-to-day business needs. (See Technical Requirement IV.C.1.d for more details.)
Strategizing for the Future and Partnering	A successful strategic partnership must be based on assurances that the partners are, and will remain, dedicated to meeting the business needs of CWS/CMS users. (See Technical Requirement IV.C.1.d for more details.)
Competent System Management	There are constant challenges associated with managing CWS/CMS. Issues arise continuously from a variety of stakeholders and changes are always requested, leading to an extremely dynamic environment. (See Technical Requirement IV.C.1.d for more details.)
Focus on Users' Needs	Meeting the business needs of CWS/CMS users is the core objective that drives all management activities. (See Technical Requirement IV.C.1.d for more details.)

- **Each Evaluator will be given a Bidder's Draft Proposal to evaluate (Process 2)**

  Team members will evaluate one proposal at a time. Each evaluator will be given their own copy of a proposal. <u>The evaluator must not make any marks on Bidder proposals.</u>

- **The Executive Summary should be read for an overview of the Bidder's approach (Process 3)**

  The Executive Summary will provide the evaluator with an overview of the most significant features of the Bidder's proposal for maintaining and operating CWS/CMS. It will condense and highlight the contents of the proposal to provide the evaluator with a broad understanding of the entire proposal, thereby facilitating its evaluation. The Executive Summary may also include conclusions and generalized recommendations.

- **Specific RFP Technical Requirements will be read and reviewed (Process 4)**

  Section IV of the RFP contains Technical Requirements for CWS/CMS, and each evaluator will be responsible for verifying that a portion of these requirements has been addressed by the Bidder in an acceptable manner. A document which identifies the Section IV Technical Requirements that fall within each evaluation team's strategic business need focus will be provided to each evaluator.

- **A Bidder's Draft Proposal responses will be read and evaluated, and the evaluator will determine if a Bidder's responses are acceptable (Processes 5 and 6)**

  Evaluators will be responsible for evaluating Bidder responses to a specific set of requirements, from the perspective of their team's assigned strategic business need. For example, the evaluator who has technical expertise and is assigned to the team with a focus of *"Sustain the Viability of CWS/CMS"* may be asked to evaluate the Bidder's response to Technical Requirement *IV.C.4.c.8 COTS Software* from the perspective of that team's strategic business need. Some evaluators will be required to wear "multiple hats" and evaluate Bidder responses from the perspective of more than one strategic business need. Evaluators may also identify any other Bidder responses that they find to be unacceptable from the perspective of their teams' strategic business need focus.

  After reading the corresponding requirement, the evaluator will review and validate the Bidder's response against the requirement for the sole purpose of determining if the Bidder's response is acceptable.

  Criteria for determining if a response is acceptable consists of the following:

  - Has the Bidder committed to meeting the requirement?

  - Does your knowledge and experience lead you to believe that the Bidder's approach is reasonable, feasible and meets the requirement?

  If a particular response to a technical requirement is found by the evaluator to be unacceptable, then that evaluator will record what it is in the response that is unacceptable and why they believe it to be unacceptable, using the Evaluation Form provided. See paragraph H. Evaluation Tools for examples of Evaluation Forms. For example, it is entirely acceptable to state that the Bidder's response is not clear, but it is also important to note the reasons that a response is deemed to be unclear. If during the evaluation process, the

evaluator has suggestions for criteria that could be used in evaluating Bidders' Final Proposals, it would be a great help to future evaluators to record that criteria.

- **The discrepancies found by evaluators will be reviewed for clarity by the Team Process Manager (Process 7)**

  Once all of the evaluators on a team have completed their reviews of the Bidder's proposal, the Team Process Manager will compile an aggregate of the team's findings.

- **DGS will hold confidential discussions with Bidders (Process 8)**

  When the evaluation of draft proposals has been completed, all of the evaluation teams' findings will be compiled by the RFP team and given to DGS. DGS will then meet with each Bidder to discuss the outcome of the evaluation process, so that the Bidder may correct any discrepancies found before submitting its final proposal.

H.   EVALUATION TOOLS

In order to facilitate the recording of evaluators' comments, a form will be provided which can be accessed either online or used manually. Refer to Figure 6 – Evaluation Form (Online) and to Figure 7 – Evaluation Form (Manual) to see examples of these forms. If an evaluator chooses to manually record evaluation comments, clerical staff will be available to enter that evaluator's comments into a database at the end of the day.

The Evaluation Form will facilitate the capturing of an evaluator's comments in a single location. After the evaluator has read the requirement for which a Bidder response is to be evaluated, the evaluator will select the name of his/her assigned Evaluation Team and specify the Proposal Evaluated in the second line of the form. The Section IV Technical Requirement for which a Bidder's response was evaluated should be selected in line 3. The remainder of the form provides space for the evaluator to record discrepancies found in the Bidder's response, as well as the evaluator's reasons for the discrepancy in that Bidder's response. Desktop Procedures will be handed out during training which provide step by step directions for using the Proposal Discrepancies screen.

Figure 6 – Evaluation Form (Online)

Figure 7 – Evaluation Form (Manual)

PROPOSAL DISCREPANCIES		
Record #:	**Evaluator Name:**	**Creation Date:**
Evaluation Team:		**Proposal Evaluated:**
Section IV Requirement:		
Discrepancy Noted by this Evaluator:	**Your Reasons for this Discrepancy:**	

I. SUMMARY

The State would like to thank each evaluator for the time they are so generously giving to the evaluation process. Each evaluator's input is valued and appreciated. As Bidders' responses are read, it may appear to the evaluator that a technical requirement lacks clarity or completeness. For example, a Bidder response may have been unacceptable due to incorrect interpretation of language in the technical requirement. All evaluator comments regarding technical requirements' validity, currency and accuracy will be greatly appreciated. Revised technical requirements will be issued in a future addendum.